

2004

The Development And Implementation Of An Orientation Program For College Athletes

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**THE DEVELOPMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION OF AN
ORIENTATION PROGRAM FOR COLLEGE ATHLETES**

BY

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**Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the
Master of Arts in Corporate and Public Communication**

2004

Acknowledgements

To my loving parents who always believed that I would achieve anything I set my mind to, thank you for your undying faith, love and support and believing in me even when I didn't.

To Dr. Don Lombardi who for the past two years has served as a teacher, mentor, and most importantly a friend, thank you for all your support and advice, I would not know 'wha' to do without you.

I would also like to extend a special thank you to Joe Piscopo for giving me the chance to prove myself and my abilities when no one else would. Thank you for taking that risk, mere words cannot explain how appreciative I will always be towards you.

Last but not least, I would like to thank all my family and friends, you know who you are, that have supported me through all of this. Your support and tolerance was greatly appreciated throughout this process.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

<u>CHAPTER I - The Kickoff</u>	1
Personal Interest	4
Research Question	6
Secondary Questions	6
Purpose of the Study	7
Objectives	8
Definition of Terms	9
Limitations	11
Conclusion	12
<u>CHAPTER II - The Instant Replay</u>	13
Media Perspective	14
The Highlight Reel	15
The Coaches	16
The Flutie Factor	17
"The Program"	21
Case Studies	29
Troubled Programs	29
Individual Cases	34
Conclusion	41
<u>CHAPTER III - The Rebuilding Period</u>	42
The Development Process	42
Motivational Techniques	46
Sender Tenets	48
Receiver Tenets	49
Receiver Dynamics	50
SWOT Analysis	53
<u>CHAPTER IV - Inside the Huddle</u>	56
Description Survey	56
Sample	56
Purpose of the Survey	57
Analyzing the Results	57
Conclusion	64
<u>CHAPTER V - The Playbook</u>	66
Training Manual	66
Introduction	67
Training Schedule	70
Meet and Greet	72

Good vs. Bad Example	73
A Tale of Two Teammates	74
Video & Media Clips	75
Role Playing	80
Guest Speaker	82
Survey	85
Summary	86
<u>CHAPTER VI</u> – <i>The Buzzer Beater</i>	87
Ten key points to success	88
Conclusion	93
WORKS CITED	96
APPENDIX A – Survey Instrument	101

Chapter I

The Kick-off

The popularity of college athletics has grown over the years to epic proportions. As its popularity has grown, so has the scrutiny of the role college athletes undertake at these institutions of higher learning. It has become far too common to read the news and see stories regarding student athletes in academic or legal trouble. Have student athletes become increasingly uncontrollable or are they a product of the environment that has instilled a 'holier than thou' image within them since they first showed glimpses of outstanding athletic ability? The pressure of winning in college sports is at an all-time high and for many student-athletes, the adjustment period to college and the pressure of winning might prove to be "too much too soon" for them to handle.

Hundreds of millions of dollars a year are spent on collegiate sports television and merchandising contracts, along with significant money spent by universities to develop state-of-the-art athletic facilities to house their teams and maximize attendance at their games. The University of Oregon recently constructed a \$ 3 million state-of-the-art football locker room with individual Internet hookups and widescreen plasma televisions (USA Today, 2003, p.11A). With all this money being spent by athletic departments there is also related pressure for these teams to win. Every year collegiate athletic coaches venture across the nation to find the best prospects available and recruit them to play at their school in hopes that they will put the best team possible on the field or court the following season.

Years ago, recruitment was relegated exclusively to junior or seniors in high school, students nearing the decision as to what university they would attend after their high school years are complete. Now, kids who have not even reached the age of seventeen have been recruited at three different levels-junior high, high school and summer leagues. The big names might change from year to year, but the frenzy, hype and hysteria to sign the best prospects remain constant. Kids who have been pursued this long sooner or later are instilled with an inflated ego and become immensely overconfident of his odds of a pro career.

Joe Paterno, the legendary coach of Penn State football, described the problem and stated that adults are intervening and developing children way too early when it comes to life as an athlete:

"Whatever happened to the good old days when if you felt like playing baseball you would go round up your buddies, get a bat and a ball and would go out and play? What do we do now? We dress up our kids in uniforms, give them professional equipment, tell them where to play, when to play, organize their games for them, give them officials and put them in the hands of a coach who doesn't know the first thing about the sport or what's good for an 8-year old" (McMillen, 1992 p.40).

As coaches' recruiting tactics intensify and focus on younger athletes every year, more students are being given preferential treatment at an earlier age because of their sports prowess. For example, how is the 12-year old boy who's playing CYO basketball supposed to react, when he knows he has scouts and assistant coaches at his game

looking to recruit him for high school? Or what about the mom whose son wants to play soccer and confided her worry that he'd be starting in the sport too late: the boy by the way is in third grade! By the time these athletes reach college they have been pampered so much by parents and coaches that the only thing they focus on is toning their skills towards a career in pro sports rather than taking advantage of a scholarship and developing skills they can use for the rest of their life.

In the last few years it has become all too common for athletes to forego their last few years of collegiate eligibility to turn pro. Due to the by-laws of the National Football League (NFL), college athletes are prohibited from applying for the pro draft before they are three years removed from playing high school or after their junior season of college. But in sports such as basketball, baseball and ice hockey that do not have restrictions, gifted high school athletes are leaving after one season of college eligibility or passing on college altogether for the opportunity to sign a pro contract.

Everyone from the NCAA, university presidents, board members and even politicians have worked tirelessly to reverse this trend. All of these parties have attempted everything from reducing the contact sports agents may have with a student-athlete, to even proposing to pay collegiate athletes a larger stipend to minimize university boosters from funneling players money illegally. John Square, a defensive end for the University of Miami football team believes many students accept money from boosters out of necessity, not greed. "I know why you see and hear about players taking money around the country," he said. "Because none of us have any. Between football and school, it's impossible to have a part-time job, and it's really a hustle to make ends meet" (Drape, 2003). Former Nebraska football coach and current Republican congressman for

Nebraska, Tom Osborne does not believe in players living below the poverty line, but believes the universities should enlarge the athletes' scholarships to include living expenses rather than pay the athletes directly (Telander, 1996 p.33). No matter what the plan might be, how do these universities compete in trying to offer these student athletes a good education when all the athletes see and hear are stories of athletes just like themselves making millions of dollars on a contract and endorsements by turning professional?

This study will focus on how many student-athletes are not prepared for their life on campus, and in many cases, do not properly prepare themselves for life after sports. There is overwhelming evidence to support or refute the fact that many institutions of higher learning have become a minor league for professional sports and do not properly prepare their student athletes for life outside of the sports arena. Using numerous cases and research, this study will concentrate on how the implementation of a mandatory orientation class will assist student athletes in not only adjusting to life on campus but also develop a thought process towards developing a future for themselves after their lives as an athlete are over.

Personal Interest-A Stake in the Game

Since his childhood, the author has always been an athlete and shared in a 'love for the game'. The sports world has evolved greatly since the days of my childhood but the competition and intensity that drives many of us to be so passionate about sports still

remains. The love of sports is what also drives the author's desire to make a change in its process before irrevocable harm is done to the sports industry.

Far too frequently in today's news we see stories regarding an athlete, pro or collegiate, making the headlines not for their outstanding play in yesterday's game, but rather because they are either in trouble with the law, their school or both. Gambling, assault, drugs, rape and academic infractions all seem to be common associations with today's modern athlete. Was this the same industry I grew up loving?

Why is it so common for athletes nowadays to find themselves in troubling situations? How do we expect anyone, commonly between the ages of 18-22, to act otherwise when they are handed life on a silver platter? Society makes these athletes the 'big men on campus' when they come to college yet never warn them that there are responsibilities and rules that go along with receiving the keys to the kingdom.

The author strongly believes that much of what plagues today's modern athlete could be prevented if they were taught at the college level what to expect and how to handle 'real world' situations that they will ultimately face somewhere in their career. You can never start teaching people too early what to expect from the real world, especially when it comes to athletes and as proven by many of today's headlines, waiting until these athletes turn pro to teach them is far too late. The sooner they are aware of what lies ahead of them and study the pitfalls that have ruined so many other promising athletes before them, the better off they will be for a bright future.

Research Question

Do the escalating pressures of being a college athlete demand that universities and colleges with athletic programs invest in developing a practical course, specifically to comprehensively assist their athletes in adjusting to life on campus? This study will explore whether or not college athletes are overwhelmed by an array of facets and if there is a growing need for assistance in adjusting to the rigors of college athletics and campus life.

Secondary Questions

To have a clear comprehension of what influences or impacts a collegiate athlete during his tenure at school, the research will also dedicate time to answering the following questions:

- #1. What role should the athlete's school play in preparing the student for his life on campus?
- #2. What does history provide as a guide to star college athletes abusing their privileges, not being able to handle the pressures/pitfalls of college athletics and why they would need assistance for this transition?
- #3. What makes an athlete's transition to college so much different from that of a regular student?
- #4. Are an athlete's academics secondary to his play on the field?
- #5. Are college coaches/recruiters to blame for instilling a 'holier than thou' theory within the minds of the athletes from the first days of recruitment?

#6. How have student athletes responded to constant pressure from the media and university boards calling for academic reform and stricter policies among collegiate athletic programs?

#7. What is the future of the NCAA and how will it affect college athletes?

#8. What would be the components of the orientation program?

Purpose of the Study

The history of collegiate athletics is polluted with former athletic greats who ran into academic or legal trouble in college or when they turned pro because they were not prepared to handle the fame and notoriety. Tom McMillen (1992), who himself was a highly recruited blue-chip high school basketball prospect, was an All-American at the University of Maryland and had an excellent 11-year career in the NBA, believes a college degree for an athlete may merely reflect the ability of the athletic department to outwit the college directors and the public. A recent study of former varsity athletes discovered that, within a decade after leaving school, they were the least likely of any group to believe that the education they received was relevant to their work. These athletes were also the only group to claim to work less with ideas than with people and paper (Bowen & Levin, 2003).

The fanfare that is associated with the recruitment of a high school athlete may aid the myth that the best way for a below-average student to get into college is through sports. McMillen (1992) points out that in a 1990 survey that more high school students thought their best chance for a college scholarship was through athletics rather than academics, music, art or other fields (p.64). If athletes have that mentality entering

college, what is their mindset towards life after college? In fairness to the athletes, if everyone around you is doing their best to make life easy for you so you can concentrate on sports, how do you realize there is life after sports when that is all that has been instilled in you since such a young age? Through a review of the literature, the author of this study will explore how so many highly touted athletes fell into the classic "pitfalls" in college and ruined what could have been very bright futures for themselves.

There is no question that the professional sports industry is a very lucrative business. There are those athletes who have great collegiate careers and then go on to stellar careers in the pros as well. But what happens to the thousands of athletes every year when their dreams of playing professionally are dashed away by either the lack of talent, off-the field troubles or injury? There is overwhelming evidence that far too often student athletes are putting too much effort into making it to the professional level and not enough time thinking about what will they do if and when their career as an athlete will come to an end. Even when many athletes do make it to the professional level they do not always know how to handle fame and fortune because they were never taught what to expect or how to deal with certain "real world" situations. The author will focus on the concept that if more of these former athletes had a training class that assisted them in adapting to college life and developing a "Plan B" for life after sports, the athletes might have possibly been able to prevent many of these unfortunate incidents.

Objectives

The intention of this study will be to understand the impact that outside influences such as coaches, parents, peers and the media have on a college athlete. The author will

focus on three main objectives throughout the research. The first objective will focus on a history of troubled collegiate athletes and the poor decisions they made which in some way impacted their future career in sports. How did these athletes go wrong? Who's to blame in situations such as these? Is it the parents? Is it their coaches? The media? The second objective will be to develop an orientation program based primarily on issues that have derailed former student-athletes' careers and to assist them in developing a solid future for themselves either with or without sports.

Definition of Terms

1. Graduation Rates: The percentage of student-athletes who enter in the fall semester on athletics financial aid and graduate within six years from the date of initial full-time enrollment. Transfer and non-scholarship student-athletes are not included.
2. Student-Athlete: A male or female with extraordinary physical skills that enable him or her to compete against others in team or individual sports while simultaneously working towards a degree in higher education.
3. Recruited Student Athlete: A student athlete that is sought after by a coach and invited to become a part of the coach's program. A prospective student-athlete has been recruited when an institutional staff member or athletics representative:
 1. provides the prospect with an official (paid) visit to campus
 2. arranges and in-person meeting with the prospect and/or the prospect's parents

3. initiates or arranges telephone contact with the prospect on more than one occasion for the purpose of recruitment
4. Sportsmanship- Appreciation of the game and other competitors in victory and defeat through words and actions displayed through responsibility, civility, fairness, courage and respect.
5. Walk-on athlete- A Student athlete who is a full participant in intercollegiate athletics, but does not receive athletics financial aid.
6. Intercollegiate Athletics- The athletic programs of competing colleges and universities.
7. National Collegiate Athletic Association- The governing body devoted to the sound administration of intercollegiate athletics at hundreds of member institutions that range in size and ability levels.
8. Division I- The highest level of competition in collegiate sports
9. Heisman Trophy- The yearly award given to the top athlete in collegiate football
10. NCAA Tournament- A 64-team elimination competition that takes place during the month of March among the top college basketball teams in the country.

Limitations

To some extent this research is restricted in part because of its exclusive focus on what are deemed the four "major" sports: Football, basketball, baseball and ice hockey. There are a host of other team sports that are governed by the NCAA. The four "majors"

listed above just happen to be the biggest revenue producing sports for college athletics and receive the most notoriety. Due to these factors the author believes that these sports represent the most vital research of the pressures of playing such highly publicized sports and the effects that they have on student-athletes and for some, represents the reasons for their eventual demise.

Due to the lack of supporting evidence, another factor that inhibits the research is the fact that the study only focuses on athletes from pro sports (present and former) and Division I athletes. The study does not cover sports from Division two, three or Intramural clubs.

Conclusion

Collegiate athletics represents an aggregate half-a-billion dollar cash cow for universities and the NCAA. Whether it is the College bowl games in January or the NCAA basketball tournament, better known as "March Madness," both bring unparalleled crowds, media attention and excitement to the schools that are lucky enough to compete in the games. The lucrative television, marketing and sponsorship deals are the driving force behind schools investing so much time and money into their athletic programs. With all the money being spent on athletic programs isn't it about time that the schools spent a portion of this revenue on a program to ensure their student athletes of a bright future whether it be in or out of sports?

As we proceed to Chapter 2, the author will look at the history of college athletics and how so many athletes that were once revered by their coaches, student body and alumni, fell from grace. What caused their demise? Was it the pressure? Was it too

much too soon for them to handle? Was it lack of direction? Whatever the reasons are that led to their downfalls, the fact remains that student athletes do run into troubling situations more frequently and on many occasions, are not aware how to handle it.

Chapter II

The Instant Replay

At a recent seminar, NCAA executive director Dick Shultz said, "If you ask the average person what his perception of college athletics is, he'll tell you four things:

1. Colleges make millions of dollars at the expense of the college athlete
2. All coaches cheat
3. Athletes never graduate
4. And all athletes are drug addicts" (Telander, 1996 p.24)

This is not revelatory news to sports fans. Everyone involved in college athletics have discussed all these comments at great length with no resolve. Who is to blame for the public opinion of college sports being so low? Is the blame automatically supposed to be shouldered by the student athletes?

"You can't blame the athlete when he sees the whole world cheating," says Dr. Thomas Turko, a professor of sports psychology at San Jose State University. "That seems to be the ethos in our society today: 'Can I get away with it?' is the question. Athletes don't feel they're doing anything wrong" (Sperber 2000).

This section of the chapter will study what role the media, a team's coach and an athlete's school has on the overall performance and psyche of a student athlete.

Media Perspective

David Letterman aired the following on his late night talk show one night after Southern Methodist University received the 'death penalty' by the NCAA and was no longer allowed to compete for one year and on a limited basis the year after.

The top ten courses for athletes at SMU:

10. Subtraction: Addition's Tricky Pal
9. The first 30 pages of *A Tale of Two Cities*: Foundation of a Classic
8. Sandwich-making (final project required)
7. Alumni-owned Hotels, Restaurants and Car Dealerships: The interlocking economy
6. Pre-Law Seminar: Age of Consent in the 50 States
5. The Denny's Menu: Recent Discoveries
4. The Bunny and the Wolf: Hand Shadow Workshops
3. Draw Winky
2. From First Love to Looker: The Films in Which Susan Dey Appears Naked
1. The Poetry of Hank Stram (McMillen, 1992 p.76)

Although Letterman had the crowd roaring with laughter, the sad reality is that this is how the media and a large portion of the country view college athletics. Many are under the assumption that student athletes have everything taken care of for them and that the majority of the athletes are there to just play their respective sport and take classes to fill up the extra time in between practices.

Is this something the media created or have they just been feeding wood to an already large bonfire? As Ira Berkow, a noted columnist for the New York Times noted, "Rarely does a day pass when the daily newspaper doesn't contain some story of recruiting or ethical violation in some athletic department in some grove of academe" (Sperber, 2000 p.26).

When speaking of collegiate sports, recruiting or ethical violations means a school or its coaching staff circumventing rules set forth by the NCAA to illegally obtain or assist a student athlete. Providing the players with academic and/or financial favors while in school constitutes two of the major areas of violations among college sports.

But are universities and the NCAA trying to do all they can to clean up college sports or are they policing only in certain cases as a tactical move to set forth a positive public image? According to one collegiate sports authority "Consequently, close observers of the college sports scene, including coaches and athletes, estimated that only a small fraction of the total violations resulted in punishment by the NCAA" (Zimbalist, 1999).

The Highlight Reel

Nowadays, the media plays such an important part in the glorification of sports, college athletes spend an inordinate amount of time practicing and doing whatever it takes in hopes of making a play worthy of ESPN's *Top Ten Highlights* or at the very least making the local news' highlight reel. The media has devoted so much time and money into college sports and looking for the 'next big thing' in sports that many athletes believe to really stand out in their sport they have to make an extraordinary play every

time they step foot on the field. This factor alone can lead to added pressure that could cause an injury or worse, cause the student to do something drastic to gain an edge, such as the use of performance-enhancing drugs or even put so much time into practicing that he puts little or no time into his academic studies.

The Coaches

Coaching is supposed to be one of the noblest and most honest professions. A coach is someone who takes his group of young men and shapes them both mentally and physically towards a bright future. Many coaches will lead us to believe that they are building proper, upstanding, freethinking, superior men at the same time while they are developing good athletes. This is not necessarily so. In an article written by Professors James H. Frey and John D. Massengale of the University of Nevada-Las Vegas they state that school sports and the teaching people associated closely with those sports-coaches, primarily educate participants in a "dysfunctional manner." Meaning that the things players are taught are not necessarily what they need to learn to become good humans (Telander, 1996 p.87).

If this is true, are college coaches teaching their athletes valuable lessons for life or lessons valuable only equitable to their play on the field? Bob Knight a legendary coach for Indiana University and Texas Tech, who when asked once about how he deals with the pressure of college coaching replied by comparing it to rape, noting "if rape is inevitable, relax and enjoy it" (Sperber, 2000 p.24). Knight ironically had recently won his third NCAA men's basketball championship at Indiana prior to that comment and was seen as a legend in the eyes of his players and the fans before and even after the comment

was made public. If that was the type of comments he was making to the media, what then was he teaching his players?

Coaches have the power to instill in their players the knowledge necessary to be successful on or off the field. On many occasions, coaches can communicate to the players in areas where a teacher or advisor cannot because coaches become the only person an athlete will trust. Instead of using that bond of trust to educate the athlete as to the proper steps to build a good future for themselves, they often wind up telling the player what they want to hear. For example, Al McGuire, the late former coach of Marquette's basketball team noted, "I never told a kid not to leave school early for the big dollars after I looked into his refrigerator. I know those kids. I knew the environment they had to escape. I would have been a total hypocrite to tell them to stay in school. For what? They only came to play basketball and get noticed" (McMillen, 1992 p.101).

If coaches regularly hand out advice of such sorts, then aren't they depriving their athletes the right to know and understand 'the big picture'? Shouldn't coaches be educating their athletes not only on game film and strategy but also giving them a handbook to the 'game of life' as well?

The Flutie Factor

Doug Flutie was the quarterback for Boston College (BC) in the early 1980's. In 1984, Flutie engineered one of the most memorable moments in college sports history. Boston College was losing to the University of Miami when Flutie threw up a long pass

(otherwise known as a "Hail Mary" pass) at the end of the game and was caught for a touchdown that won the game for BC.

Flutie eventually won the Heisman Trophy that year for being the top college athlete, but also did something more important: he took BC, a historically quiet Jesuit school in the suburbs of Boston and as many sports commentators mentioned, "put his school on the map (Sperber, 2000 p.61)." The impact of that game's results were evident almost immediately as applications for admission to BC rose to heights never before seen by an American Institution of higher learning: hence the term the Flutie Factor (Sperber 2000). Even when BC started a stretch of losing seasons in the late 1980's-early 1990's, admissions saw a slight drop in applications but they were still higher than before Flutie's magical performance.

Since that time, many American institutions have used the Flutie Factor as the main reason for big-time spending on their athletic programs. Generally many institutions have found that winning validates an institution for many students. Students want to be a part of a winning team. Former University of Buffalo president William Greiner commented, "You do [big-time] college athletics because...it is certainly a major contribution to the total quality of student life and the visibility of your institution (Sperber, 2000 p.65)."

If institutions put so much effort into hyping their athletic programs, do they also put that much effort into ensuring that the student athletes who make their programs so distinguished, receive a good education?

Even the term 'student-athlete' in and of itself is an anomaly. Where else, other than athletics do we give students a double title? Do schools have student-musicians or

student-artists? The title of student athlete is just proof that schools expect the athletes to lead double lives. No other students are expected to be one person for half the day and another person for the other half.

Isiah Thomas, former basketball star for Indiana University and then the Detroit Pistons, once commented:

"When you go to college your not a student-athlete but an athlete-student. Your main purpose is not to be an Einstein but a ballplayer, to generate some money, put people in the stands. Eight or ten hours of your day are filled with basketball, football or baseball. The rest of your time you've got to motivate yourself to make sure you get something back" (Sperber, 2000 p.28).

Getting a good education is not usually one of the top priorities for many student athletes, especially if they have the talent to turn professional. Rick Telander, a writer for Sports Illustrated magazine, noted (1996) that many now-famous football stars such as Deion Sanders (Florida State), former Heisman Trophy winner Barry Sanders (Oklahoma State) and Broderick Thomas (Nebraska) all were standouts on the playing field but were hardly, if ever, seen in the classroom. When former Florida State University (FSU) president Bernard Sliger was told that Deion Sanders had not been to many classes over his tenure at the school, his response was "the position I take is that I'll let the athletic director handle the matter...just as I would let any dean of any other school handle similar situations" (p.111). Does FSU have a Dean for the School of Football?

If not attending classes was the worst part of a student athlete's educational process an easy remedy could be rendered. Unfortunately, at many institutions the problems reach far deeper than missing classes. Sperber (2000) noted that a recent magazine article mentioned that some institutions have taken assisting their athletes to a whole new level.

Sometimes the schools are directly responsible [for cheating]...A former tutor for the University of Minnesota revealed that she had written 400 papers for 20 varsity men's basketball players between 1993 and 1998.

McMillen (1992) even noted that this is not something new nor should we be surprised any longer at a university's actions. As far back as 1929 the Carnegie report mentioned the degradation of education for the good of sport:

[A]t no point in the educational process has commercialism in college athletics wrought more mischief than in its effect upon the American undergraduate. And the distressing fact is that the college, the Fostering Mother, has permitted and even encouraged it to do these things in the name of education (p.81).

Scandals such as the one at University of Minnesota are large but not necessarily infrequent. There are many cases that do not come to the forefront of the media or spotlight basically because either the schools or the athletic departments have done enough to cover themselves and the athletes from being caught. Schools are basically sending dangerous messages to their athletes: The normal rules of academics or admissions do not apply for stud athletes. Having the institution assist the athlete through

classes seem to be an invaluable tool to the athlete during his playing years, but who will be there to assist him when he is no longer playing sports?

“The Program”- A fictitious look at college athletics

The Program is a film that was created in 1993 but is still very much a standard as to what life is like as a member of a Division I Top 10 college football team and the problems that student athletes commonly encounter. Of course the movie has its Hollywood mix of over-dramatic episodes and exaggerated moments, but some of the events that take place are very much a real part of the college sports lifestyle. The movie stars Craig Scheffer as Joe Kane, Eastern State University's (ESU) enigmatic, Heisman-trophy candidate quarterback, Omar Epps as Darnell Jefferson, the team's freshman sensation tailback and James Caan, better known as Sonny Corleone in *The Godfather* trilogy, as the demanding Coach Winters who throughout all the problems, attempts to keep the team together amid all the turmoil in hopes of going to a major Bowl game.

The author will discuss the characters from the movie, how they are portrayed and how situations in the movie translate into real world situations and the significance of each for student athletes in college athletics.

The Recruitment of Darnell Jefferson

The movie begins with a clip of the end of ESU's prior season, a loss, which knocked them out of Bowl contention. As the film opens, the coach is on a recruiting mission to land Darnell Jefferson, a highly touted high school prospect from Philadelphia. Darnell is joined by the reverend of the prep school he is attending in his initial recruiting

meeting with the coach. The reverend acting as a guardian for Jefferson, explain his concern over football coming before a good education. Both Jefferson and the reverend are assured by the coach that Darnell's schoolwork and education will be the main priority if he attends ESU.

Jefferson is then brought to ESU's campus on a second recruiting visit and is initially met by the quarterback, Kane and a small parade of cheerleaders and students to greet him upon his arrival. Kane then introduces Jefferson to his campus guide for the day, a beautiful girl named Autumn (played by Halle Berry). The first place Autumn takes Darnell is Wolf Den Stadium where up on the scoreboard in big bright lights is a sign that reads "ESU welcomes starting tailback #20, Darnell Jefferson."

Darnell agrees to come to ESU and the following fall, returns on the same bus that brought him there during his recruiting visit but this time is only met by Kane and one of the Offensive Lineman. When Darnell asks where all the fanfare was that they used when he came to visit, Kane replies, "Well regular students don't come back for another two weeks, and besides now your ours. Your just another freshman now."

The Cinema Significance of this shows just a small portion of what its like for a high school athlete to get recruited by a university. When Darnell was getting recruited, he was given the "red carpet" treatment and promised a bright future, but from the day he stepped foot on campus, life was different and wasn't exactly the same as when he was recruited.

This is the same for many real high school athletes who get recruited, are promised the world, everything looks incredible and then when they actually start their

life at the school, it is much different then what they imagined or even worse, what was promised to them.

Joe Kane and the Heisman Watch

Joe Kane is the white quarterback with the strong arm and a thrill for living on the edge. He's from a small town kid from a one-family household where his Mom died years ago and his father is an alcoholic.

As the season is about to get underway, there is much talk about Joe being a Heisman Trophy candidate. One of Joe's teammates brings the new issue of Sports Illustrated (SI) to show Joe and some of the other players. Kane is on the cover with the QB from Michigan and the title of the magazine says "*Heisman Hopefuls?*"

Soon after Joe is met with a lot of talk from teammates, coaches and university personnel, regarding his Heisman candidacy. It seems to be that as the "Heisman talk" grows larger, Kane gets more and more uncomfortable. Joe tries to keep his head about the whole issue and ignore it as much as possible but as the season grows, so does the pressure put upon Kane's shoulders to not only win the Heisman, but carry his team to a Bowl game as well. A larger rift is also developing between he and his father who will not even watch any of the games Kane plays in on television, more or less actually go and watch his son play live in person.

The crucial point of the season for Kane came in week 5 of the season when ESU faced off against one of the other Heisman trophy candidates, the quarterback for Michigan. It was billed as the "battle of the Heisman candidates."

Kane played a great game but threw a crucial interception late in the game, due in part to a possible concussion he suffered earlier in the game but refused to leave the game because of it. ESU loses and after the game Kane is seen soaking under a hot shower as a way not only to relieve the physical pain he felt but also as a maneuver to stay away from the large amount of press that were waiting to interview him.

Later that evening Joe is at a local bar drinking with Darnell Jefferson, when a male patron at the bar approaches Kane. The man starts having words with Joe and eventually it escalades into a fight. Joe winds up throwing the man through a trophy case and runs out with Jefferson close behind. As they are driving away from the bar, they get pulled over by the police for speeding and Joe receives a DUI and an assault charge for the incident at the bar.

The next scene is Joe sitting in the coach's office talking about the ramifications of the prior evening. The Coach tells Kane that he had to enter him into a 4-week rehabilitation center to avoid the DUI and possible jail time. Joe protests and tells the coach to "fix this like you fix everything else." After much protesting by Joe, the coach tells him that he should make the best of it and he'll still be able to make it back for the last game of the season and possibly a bowl game.

Significance There are many players within college athletics that have felt exactly how the character Joe Kane felt. When a student athlete becomes a national icon and is known to be one of the best players in the country, there is a lot of pressure that comes along with the notoriety. The pressure comes from all facets of the players' life. His teammates,

coaches, school and the media set such lofty expectations, anything less than perfection on the field is seen as unacceptable.

This type of pressure can be a motivator for some or it can lead to a total breakdown for others. If the athlete is not properly prepared to handle the pressure that goes along with being one of the best athletes in the country it can lead to more than just a mistake on the field. Unfortunately, as seen in the movie, being unable to handle pressure can lead to other problems such as drinking, fighting or worse, trouble with the law. Many times, especially when it becomes a situation that involves the law, there is nothing a coach or a school can do to get that player out of trouble without some form of repercussions.

Athletic teams are so focused on winning they just automatically expect their star players to be able to deal with the pressures that come along with playing college sports. Just because a student is a talented athlete, does not necessarily mean that they will be able to handle the pressure that the media and schools put on them to win.

The Coach's Dilemma

Coach Winters faces numerous problems during the season and struggles with tough decisions that hinge on the success of the team while trying to maintain integrity for himself and his program.

His first test of the season came in the pre-season when defensive lineman Steve Lattimer, a practice squad and special teams player for most of the last 3 years shows up 30 pounds heavier and much more aggressive. Some of the coaches mentioned that his increase in talent and attitude might be due in part because of steroids.

Coach Winters tells his staff that it is not unfounded for a player to "hit the gym" and gain that much size over one summer and that the NCAA has testing in place to check for these kinds of things and they should let the league handle it. Although he sees many signs of possible steroid use, he chooses to turn his head and not address it.

Turning his back to a potential problem proved costly as three weeks into the season during a party, Lattimer's aggressiveness got the best of him as he almost raped a girl when she requested that they stop their romantic interlude. Fortunately, two teammates heard the screaming and stopped him before any real physical harm was done.

When faced with having to punish Lattimer for his actions, Coach Winters decides on a three game suspension for his player. The coach tells Lattimer that he'll report to the press that Lattimer has a groin pull to protect his image, but he must use those three weeks to cleanse the steroids from his body. Lattimer returns after his suspension clean but soon after finds he doesn't have the same ability and late in the season returns to steroid use. Coach Winters discovers this during the final game and at the end of the game tells Lattimer that he has played his last game for the team.

The second major problem Winters encounters is with his backup quarterback Bobby Collins. Collins is a typical know-it-all who thinks he can get away with anything because he's a football player, including dating the coach's daughter. During an examination a professor discovers that the coach's daughter was taking a test and pretending to be Bobby Collins. As a result both Bobby and the coach's daughter are expelled from school. The coach's daughter is forced to enroll in a junior college nearby.

Three weeks later when Joe Kane is sent to rehab a school official approaches Coach Winters and explains to him that pressure is coming from influential alumni to

request a hearing to re-instate Bobby Collins because Collins is the best chance they have to keep winning while Kane is away from the team. Although Winters is opposed to it, the official tells him that if he doesn't do this, Winters' job might be in jeopardy.

The coach is later seen at the hearing and has to give reasons as to why the school should lift the suspension of Collins and re-instate him. Although there is clear evidence that Collins does not belong at the university, Winters states that Collins has served his punishment and should be given a second chance. When the school president puts the coach on the spot and says the bottom line of the case is about character, he asks if the coach can vouch for Bobby Collins' character. The coach reluctantly answers "yes."

Significance A coach's job is never an easy task, especially in college athletics. You are not only expected to be a coach, but also act as a form of a father figure for many of the players as well. There are many times when a coach's decisions are based on what is good for the team rather than the coach's personal beliefs and ideals.

In the case of his interaction with Steve Lattimer, it was a case of not making a decision until he was forced to out of necessity. As long as Lattimer was playing well and was contributing to the team's success, the coach was able to overlook the fact that his talent might be attributed to steroid use. Once Lattimer's mental and physical condition changed and became a distraction and problematic to the team, the coach then decided to suspend Lattimer and make him end the use of steroids. Many coaches are forced into the same situations and choices because as long as an athlete's play is benefiting the team, whether it is dangerous or not to the player, they allow it to happen regardless of it being right or wrong.

In the latter case of Bobby Collins, the coach is again thrust into a situation where he has to make a decision based on what is good for the team rather than what he believes is the morally right decision. The coach has to vouch for a young man's character who is also the same person responsible for getting his daughter expelled from school. A winning team and job security overrides the coach's feelings for the player and even for his own family.

Alvin Mack's Dreams

Alvin Mack is one of the team's stars and ESU's defensive captain. Mack is in his senior season and his natural athletic ability and tenacity have made him a top-prospect for next year's NFL draft. Alvin's got himself set up for a very bright future. Or does he?

Alvin Mack for all of his athletic prowess can only read at a fourth grade level. He is barely getting by in his classes. In the last two years alone, Mack has failed 3 classes, received 3 incompletes, and withdrawn from 4 others. He has no other skills than those he possesses on the field. He believes the only thing he needs to know is "how to sign his name on an NFL contract."

In one of the last games of the season Mack is badly injured on a vicious hit by an offensive lineman. His leg is severely broken and the doctors told him that he would never play football again. The last shot of Mack in the movie is seeing him sitting on chair at home listening to the ESU game on the radio with his leg elevated in a cast. What is Mack's future now that he will never play football again?

Significance Mack's character is all too familiar in college sports. Players invest so much time in preparing themselves for a pro career in sports that they never develop a "plan B" in case of injury or some other factors derail their lofty aspirations.

Student athletes must realize that they are students and that they should take advantage of the time they have while in school to get a good education. This is not to diminish their goals of playing professional sports but they have to understand that in the four major sports (NFL, NBA, NHL & MLB), roughly only ten percent or less of all collegiate athletes go on to pro careers. () Most pro athletes will be the first to say that they are very grateful that they got a good education while they were in school so that they were readily prepared for life after sports. As John Eisenberg, a writer for the Baltimore Sun once wrote about college athletes (), They just don't understand. They've been given a free education, a rare opportunity, one that offers their lives a foundation."

Case Studies- From the real world of college athletics

The following section will feature profiles of present and former college athletes, including a look at specific athletic programs that have been acknowledged as much for their off-the field problems as their play on the field.

Troubled Programs

Oklahoma University During the mid-to-late 1980's Oklahoma Sooners football was one of the top-ranked programs in the country. At that time the Sooners were recognized as having fielded some of the best teams not only of that decade, but of all-time as well.

Unfortunately, that reputation was tarnished amid several scandals where players were charged for rape, drug trafficking shootings and robbery. As John Rohde, a former writer for the *Daily Oklahoman* put it "It's just another chapter in a long sordid tale, evidently for who knows how long, campus life has been nothing but an unmanned candy store for the OU players" (Switzer, 1990).

That style of coaching eventually cost then OU coach Barry Switzer his job in 1989 as he was forced to resign because it was believed he could no longer control his team. In one of his final team meetings he told his players "Damnit talk to me. Tell me where I went wrong" (p.347)! Switzer himself was a victim of his renegade athletes as soon after resigning from OU his house was robbed by two of his former players.

Nebraska University From 1995-1996 the Nebraska Cornhuskers football team won back-to-back national championships. Tom Osborne was their coach who many consider one of the great college football coaches of all-time. A few of the team starters had been charged with felonies such as domestic violence, assault, theft, and shooting into an occupied car and attempted murder (Zimbalist, 1999 p.47).

Osborne felt in each case that every player deserved the right to stay on the team and all these players competed in the 1996 Orange Bowl. Three of the athletes left school early after the 1996 season and were drafted in the NFL. All three have since been arrested and convicted of crimes they committed while on Nebraska.

Florida State University In October 1999 Laveranues Coles and Heisman Trophy candidate Peter Warrick, both of Florida State University Football team, were charged

with grand theft when they were allowed to underpay for clothes at a department store that were said to be valued at \$391.00 (ESPN.com, 1999). Coles was subsequently kicked off the team although Warrick was allowed to stay on for his final season but did lose out on his Heisman Trophy aspirations, as no candidate is eligible to receive the trophy once he is convicted of a felony. When asked by reporters if they knew what they did was wrong Warrick replied, "anybody would know that" (ESPN.com, 1999).

This was not the first time Warrick or Coles found themselves in trouble. In 1998 Warrick was charged with disorderly conduct and resisting arrest for a confrontation outside of a Tampa restaurant. The charges were eventually dropped.

Also in 1998 Coles was charged with striking his stepmother. He was suspended for FSU's 1998 opener and later served 150 hours of community service for the misdemeanor battery charge. Coles was also suspended for the 1999 opening game for academic reasons.

Warrick and Coles have gone on to have outstanding careers as wide receivers in the NFL for the Cincinnati Bengals and Washington Redskins respectively.

Baylor University Until the summer of 2003, Baylor University was a small private Baptist University in Texas, mostly known in athletic circles for its basketball team. Baylor made headlines over the murder of one its basketball players Patrick Dennehy. Dennehy, a transfer from New Mexico was found approximately six weeks after his death five miles from Baylor University. Carlton Dotson, a former teammate of Dennehy's was charged with the murder and is awaiting his trial.

What makes it even more tragic is that the head coach, Dave Bliss who resigned amid various NCAA violations, tried to cover up the whole scandal. Bliss attempted to portray Dennehy as a drug dealer to explain how his tuition was paid, when in reality it was Bliss who was responsible for the payments for Dennehy (Katz, 2003). One of Bliss' assistants recorded Bliss speaking about the illegal dealings and has since turned those tapes over to NCAA officials.

Baylor and its basketball program have tried to move on since the tragedy. The university took itself out of postseason play for 2004 and gave a self-imposed two-year probation in advance of the NCAA's punishment, which it's expected to announce later in the year. Due to the unusual and unfortunate circumstances surrounding Baylor, the NCAA and the Big 12 allowed players to transfer from Baylor to other schools without penalty. In normal cases any student transferring from one school to another loses one full year of eligibility and must sit out a year before they can resume play in their respective sport.

St. John's University On February 4th 2004, following a loss to Pittsburgh University on the road, six St. John's basketball players broke their curfew and headed out to a local strip club, creating one of the worst scandals for one of New York's most famous Catholic universities. A woman who worked at the strip club told police she was raped by the players but no charges were filed, as one of the players captured the sexual escapades on his cell phone and the woman was later charged with prostitution, attempted extortion and filing fictitious reports (Katz, ESPN.com, 2004).

This came on the heels of a scandal earlier in the season where Willie Shaw, another St. John's player, was kicked off the team for being arrested for marijuana possession while hanging out with former St. John's product, Marcus Hatten. Tyler Jones, a freshman and one of the players involved in the February scandal, was the only one to be reinstated by the team. Mohamed Diakite and Lamont Hamilton remain suspended, while Grady Reynolds, Elijah Ingram and Abe Keita are no longer with the program. Reynolds was expelled, Ingram withdrew from the university and the university board suspended Keita for one year.

Colorado University In one of the worst collegiate scandals in recent history, the University of Colorado football program has come under a wave of allegations, most notably for rape and shady recruiting practices that has sparked a nationwide review of college football recruiting tactics. A lawsuit filed by three women allege that they were raped at a party thrown by Colorado players for recruits that came to visit the campus in December of 2001 (Anderson & Dohrmann, 2004 p.66). Reports of the football program using alcohol and sex parties as recruiting tools to attract players, even going as far as having assistant coaches call escort services for some parties, came to light through various police reports and depositions taken by players, students and coaches. As Cortlen Johnson, a former Buffaloes tailback noted (2004), "The only guidelines you're really given are, show them a good time but don't do anything to embarrass yourself or the university" (p.68).

The latest allegations come from one of the Buffaloes very own players, former placekicker Katie Hnida. Hnida told Sports Illustrated writer Rick Reilly that during her

freshman season in 1999, she was sexually harassed and molested by teammates and raped by another teammate the following season (Reilly, 2004 p.80). Justin Bates, a former teammate stated (2004) "she endured more abuse than one person should have to bear." Hnida dropped out of Colorado after her sophomore season and is now enrolled at University of New Mexico.

Colorado coach Gary Barnett has refuted these reports and when pushed by reporters for answers to the allegations Barnett called Hnida a "distraction to the team" (ESPN.com 2004), and stated that "None of the players wanted her on the team. Basically we were doing her a favor. It was obvious Katie was not very good. She was awful" (Reilly, 2004). Since those comments, Barnett has been placed on paid administrative leave for "inappropriate and insensitive" comments by university president Elizabeth Hoffman.

Investigations into all the above allegations at the University of Colorado are still pending.

Individual Cases

Maurice Clarrett Maurice Clarrett's career at Ohio State (OSU) couldn't have started better. In his freshman season Clarrett ran for an OSU freshman record 1,237 yards, 18 touchdowns and led OSU to a national championship. Since then, Clarrett's career couldn't have been worse. Clarrett has been involved in a few scandals including an NCAA and OSU investigation of accepting illicit gifts and making a fraudulent claim to

investigators regarding a stolen car, reportedly receiving preferential treatment in his classes and threatening to sue the NFL for early entry into the NFL draft.

In April 2003 Maurice Clarrett reported to campus police that someone had broken into the car he was driving, a 2001 Chevrolet Monte Carlo. Clarrett told the police that the thieves had taken two built-in television monitors and stereo equipment worth \$5,000, \$800 in cash, \$300 in clothing and 300 compact discs (ESPN.com, 2003). In an age where 18 and 19 year-old athletes are driving around in \$50,000 cars, this very well could have happened.

Unfortunately, Clarrett oversold his story and it was discovered that the car he reported that was broken into was not even his. The car belonged to a local dealership in Columbus, Ohio whose owner told police that Clarrett had taken it for a test drive. It was also discovered that the amount of items stolen was much less than what Clarrett originally reported. In September Clarrett was charged with lying about the value of the stolen items and filing a false report. Clarrett is still awaiting trial and could face up to a \$1,000 fine and six months in prison. OSU and the NCAA suspended Clarrett for one year for, as OSU athletic director Andy Geiger described it "because Maurice failed to abide by the NCAA's Bylaw 10, which compels athletes and coaches to answer truthfully when confronted by university or NCAA questions" (ESPN.com, 2003).

As allegations of false police reports against Clarrett were already making the headlines, the New York Times broke a story about a professor at OSU giving Clarrett special treatment in class to pass an exam. The Times reported a story in July that Clarrett had passed African-American and African Studies 101 classes only after taking

two oral exams at the end of the quarter, while other students took written midterm and final examinations.

Paulette Pierce, Clarrett's professor told the Times that she worked with directly with Clarrett and administered oral exams only after Clarrett had walked out of the written midterm exam without completing it. Pierce said that her decision to give Clarrett oral exams was because of "his lack of preparation forced her to use unconventional teaching methods. At first he wasn't trying, when I started working more closely with Maurice, and paying more attention to him, he started to learn more" (ESPN.com, 2003). The professor also noted that she had previously administered oral exams to other students and denied giving Clarrett any special attention.

Amid his suspension from OSU's football team and allegations of preferential treatment in the classroom, in late September Clarrett filed a lawsuit against the NFL, requesting that a judge throw out rule that prevents him from entering the draft until he has been out of high school for three years. The lawsuit contends that the NFL rule violates antitrust law and diminishes competition. "Had Clarrett been eligible for the 2003 Draft, it is almost certain that he would have been selected in the beginning of the First Round and would have agreed to a contract and signing bonus worth millions of dollars" (ESPN, 2003). Clarrett requested that he be made eligible for the 2004 draft, under the current plan, he would not be eligible until 2005.

The NFL states (2003) that it will fight any challenge to its rules it adopted in 1990 because coaches and executives believe younger players aren't physically prepared for the league. Football is the only sport with a draft that doesn't allow teams to select players when their high school eligibility is complete. The suit was filed a day after

Clarrett's lawyer and mother both met with NFL officials to discuss whether Clarrett would be eligible for the draft on April 24, 2004.

Gameplan for Maurice Clarrett As Jon Gruden, head coach of the NFL's Tampa Bay Buccaneers stated (2003), "I don't see how an 18 or 19 year old is ready for the NFL. This is a year-round job and they've never been through that." Maurice Clarrett should heed the advice of Gruden and others that want him to stay enrolled at OSU. Instead of viewing the situation as being restrictive, Clarrett should look at this time as an opportunity to advance himself both academically and athletically.

Right now, Clarrett has made a few mistakes that have publicly damaged his character. Even if he was to win his case against the NFL, how many teams would risk a first round pick in next year's draft on someone who has been accused in the last year of falsifying police reports and of not being able to handle the pressures of school? Instead of gambling that a team will take a flyer on him in the latter first or early second round of the draft, Clarrett should stay in school, restore his image, get a good education and work on further developing his football skills to solidify his status as a potential top-five or even first overall pick in a future draft.

Adrian McPherson In 2002 Adrian McPherson started four games at quarterback for the Florida State Seminoles. He is also the only Florida athlete ever to be honored as "Mr. Football" and "Mr. Basketball", as being the top rated player in the state in each sport. Almost a full year later, McPherson will be lucky to ever play college sports again.

McPherson's promising sports career was detoured due to allegations of sports gambling and then an arrest in November 2002 on felony fraud charges for stealing a blank check and then later filling it out and cashing it (ESPN.com, 2002). Since November, McPherson has been kicked off of FSU's football team, been on trial two times for the gambling and felony charges and transferred schools twice.

In March 2003, McPherson was charged with a misdemeanor count of gambling. Testimonies from friends and those close to McPherson stated that the former FSU quarterback bet on college and pro football games, including FSU games from the 2002 season, including the one's that he played in. McPherson always wagered that FSU would win but it is an NCAA violation as a college athlete to gamble coupled with the fact that sports gambling is illegal in the state of Florida. It was reported that at one time McPherson owed a local bookmaker as much as \$8000 (ESPN.com, 2003).

After a surprising loss to North Carolina State, former FSU players called head coach Bobby Bowden to tell him that they heard McPherson, who had a poor outing, intentionally threw the game. When asked about McPherson's problems, Bowden said, "Our players are told over and over what they can and can't do and gambling is a subject that is highly stressed. I feel badly for Adrian McPherson and his family. I just can't imagine what was going through his mind. I'm obviously glad no other players were involved" (ESPN.com, 2003).

McPherson's larger problems stemmed from his arrest for stealing a blank check from a local Florida business, filling it out in the amount of \$3,500, cashing the forged document and buying goods with the money from the check. Two days prior to his arrest,

amid allegations of fraud, Bowden kicked McPherson off the team for conduct detrimental to the team.

In July 2003 McPherson pleaded no contest to gambling and theft charges in a deal where he avoided jail time but is serving 30 months of probation (ESPN.com, 2003). McPherson was also ordered to complete 25 hours of community service, serve 90 days on a county work detail and repay the money he stole from the company in Tallahassee. It could have been much worse, as he could have faced up to twenty years in jail just for the fraudulent check alone. After the trial was over McPherson said, "I'm just relieved it's all over. I'm ready to get back in school and get on with my life. I believe everything happens for a reason" (ESPN.com, 2003).

McPherson is now enrolled as a student at Tennessee State University and is waiting for the NCAA to decide whether or not he can continue with his athletic eligibility. If the NCAA re-instates McPherson he would have two years of eligibility remaining.

Gameplan for Adrian McPherson McPherson should consider himself very fortunate to have been given a chance to learn from his mistakes without having to face any jail time. Many people who make similar errors in life never get a second chance to correct their mistakes. McPherson should take the opportunity that he has been given and use it to acquire a strong education while at Tennessee State.

As of now there has been no ruling as to whether the NCAA will decide to reinstate McPherson's athletic eligibility or not. What McPherson does know is that he was accepted as a student and currently enrolled at Tennessee State. His once promising

athletic career is now very much in doubt because of his legal problems but his career as a student is very much alive.

Sports gambling has become a very sensitive subject in the present day sports society, just ask Pete Rose. There is no guarantee that even if the NCAA reinstates McPherson that any pro team would want to take a chance on him after gambling on his own team because pro teams have become increasingly wary of athletes with troubled pasts. McPherson cannot control the NCAA or a pro team's decision whether or not to provide him with a second chance to play again. What he can control is his decision to ensure himself a good future regardless of sports by receiving a good education. With a strong education behind him, McPherson can ensure that the only person who will ultimately decide his fate in life will be Adrian McPherson.

Conclusion

The purpose of this chapter was to educate the reader on the history and reasons of why it has become necessary for universities across the country to adopt a freshman athlete orientation program. As seen in the background and the case studies, there are many factors that contribute, both positively and negatively, to the overall success or failure of a student-athlete's career at a school. Many college athletes enjoy a life that is both special and extremely rewarding at times, but for those that do not know how to handle the responsibility that comes along with this type of life, it can prove costly for their future success.

In the next chapter we will discuss the key components necessary to construct, implement and manage an orientation program for student athletes. The main focus of the

chapter will include the tactics that should be used to persuade and motivate a school to implement the program. If the plan is followed accordingly, this course can be easily implemented into any school's curriculum.

Chapter III

The Rebuilding & Redirection Period

Through learning about the past in Chapter 2, we now can make it possible to change our future. At this point most everyone involved in college athletics can agree that the system that is used to adjust athletes, if one indeed exists, to college life is flawed and outdated. The future success of college athletics is dependent upon enhanced academic services and it is imperative to install this program to fit the changing needs of today's college athlete.

The author will use various techniques to present an organizational plan towards the development and implementation of the program.

The Development Process

For any school to have a successful real world program for these athletes, they must base the orientation class on PACT principles. PACT stands for Pride, Accountability, Commitment and Trust (Lombardi, 2001 p.162). These are four major characteristics that will make or break any program regardless of its concept or origin. The author will explain how each one of these will be vital components in the success or failure of the orientation program.

Pride

There is a certain amount of pride that goes along with being a part of collegiate athletics. Whether you are an athlete, coach or administrator you are a part of something special and there is a large amount of pride that goes along with being part of something not

everyone in this world can do. That sense of pride should consist of everyone involved wanting to make it the best program and assisting the athletes in making them the best they can be.

With so many athletic programs and athletes involved in scandals isn't it time to do whatever it takes to restore the image of college athletics and help players understand the magnitude of their choices and how it affects not only them, but their teammates, coaches and schools? We as representatives of college athletics cannot be truly proud of our athletes when we constantly read stories of rape, violence, illegal gambling and academic underachievement. Our main goal should be to restore the image of college athletes and take whatever steps are necessary to bring integrity back to college athletics.

This program will assist in restoring the pride and integrity to college athletics by instilling our athletes with the proper values and information necessary for them to succeed both in the classroom and on the field. The orientation class will assist in easing the overwhelming burden that many student athletes have in adjusting to their new life on campus.

What better feeling will there be as administrators to know we have given our athletes the best programs for them to succeed both as athletes and as students? Knowing that when these athletes graduate we have instilled in them with the skills and confidence necessary to succeed in their future endeavors, on or off the playing fields will be a feeling of unparalleled pride and gratification that cannot be matched in wins or losses.

Accountability

We as administrators and coaches have to start taking accountability for the actions of our athletes. While every athlete must be accountable for their own actions, we must be there

to guide and assist them in their maturation process during their time at the university. I believe that our expectations of the student athletes' decision-making skills are too lofty when they begin their college career. By readily assuming the athletes are prepared to handle college life once they arrive to campus is where we are mistaken.

It is hard enough adjusting to life on campus as a regular student more or less when you are a student athlete. There are so many more factors that have an effect on the athletes' lives while they are at school. So when the athletes make the wrong decisions are they solely to blame, or is it our fault as administrators that we didn't see to it that they have the proper training to handle themselves in any given situation? Using "real-world" examples, this class will be designed to show how former athletes made their mistakes, what the consequences were and how they could have avoided it.

This training class will not prevent every student athlete from making the wrong decisions but it will minimize their mistakes and will make them aware of certain situations and the best way to handle it if they indeed do encounter problems. There will never be a resolution to student-athletes' poor behavior and academic performance unless we as administrators take responsibility for what their lack of preparation in the past and make the necessary adjustments to change the future.

Commitment

For this orientation program to succeed we will need the commitment of the university and its staff to implement and manage the course to make it worthwhile for two main groups, the school and its student athletes.

Universities spend so much money each year on curriculum development that it is imperative to make sure each dollar is spent wisely and not wasted on "bogus" courses

that students just take to get the easy "A". Every university's main goal is a commitment to the students and to provide the highest academic excellence possible. This orientation course should be no different. Every school that implements this course must adhere to strict guidelines, making sure it has a "real world approach" and has real consequences for those student athletes who don't take it seriously and do not participate. If these guidelines are not followed properly, then it becomes a waste of time money and energy for the university.

The student athletes are our main focus and why the course was developed in the first place. If this course is to be introduced, every school must be sure that the students are learning from it and taking away a handbook that they could use for the rest of their life on campus and far beyond. A mandatory survey should be handed out at the end of the class to get feedback from the students as to their opinions on what they found positive or negative about the class and what they think could be added to the course to make it even more useful to the next athlete who takes it. Feedback will be a major factor in the overall success or failure of the program.

Trust

In any working relationship trust is imperative to the success or failure of any program. Until now, the majority of collegiate athletes have felt used by their schools and believe that their schools only have their own best interest in mind when making any decisions regarding athletics and the athletes therein.

This course is designed solely to assist student athletes in adjusting to the rigors of college life and to prepare them for a bright future no matter whether it is in the sports industry or elsewhere. Due to the alarmingly high rate of student athletes who have been

overcome by trouble either legally or academically over recent years, universities across the country have developed this program to minimize the chances of student athletes falling into the classic "pitfalls" that spell many of their former teammates. Every school needs to explain this purpose in a clear and concise manner so that the athletes understand that their school's efforts are authentic or the athletes' trust and interest in the class will never be garnered.

Motivational Techniques

Developing organizational factors which will drive the program will be useless unless the people who make the decisions for the schools are motivated to bring about a change. Why should we adopt a new program and bring another expense onto the university? Why should we do any more than we already are to help our athletes get through school? With many schools having a student athlete graduation rate at anywhere from 50-60% (Sperber, 2000), there is no better motivational tool than that alarming statistic as a reason why to implement this program.

Now that we have identified the values that will be the foundation of the program, the author will discuss the techniques and motivating factors necessary, through the use of a persuasion matrix (Lombardi, 2001) for schools to adopt this plan. They will be broken down into three forms, sender tenets, the points the sender wants to get across to his audience; the receiver tenets, which are the major facts that the receiver is going to need to understand why they should make a change; lastly will be the assessment facets which will be the points that address the problem and provide ideas towards making a resolution.

Sender Tenets

Opportunity

Everyone from university boards, to the NCAA and even state legislatures have been trying to create ways to improve today's state of college athletics. Many of the ideas that have been tossed around focused on paying the players an amount much larger than what they receive now as a stipend. But will increasing a player's stipend assist them in the classroom? Will giving them more money help them when they encounter problems and don't know how to handle it?

Many experts will say that most of the troubles that today's student athlete faces is derived from the lack of money they receive from their school for their hard work. What good is paying them larger stipends if they do not know how to handle the responsibility that comes along with being a college athlete? Universities with athletic programs should be more concerned with preparing their athletes from the outset of their college careers for the rigors they will face, both in the classroom and around campus, rather than worrying about paying them.

In an age where student athletes are being arrested for rape, violence, gambling and the like, there is no better opportunity to put this class into place. The lessons they learn from this program will prove to be more valuable in the long run than any salary the school could have given them.

Improvement to the Status Quo

The state of modern collegiate athletics is tainted and its reputation is in dire need of repair. It seems like everyday there is another article about another student athlete arrest at some university, a story regarding another collegiate star foregoing the rest of his college eligibility to pursue a professional career or a story written about a student athlete who is no longer eligible to play because of poor grades. Is there any better time than the present to implement this class?

No one associated with college athletics can be pleased with the current state of affairs but yet, in the same regard, what has anyone done to change it? This program will increase awareness among the athletes and give them a real world approach to dealing with college life and the outside distractions that have served as a downfall to so many athletes before them. By implementing this program, we are showing we are not pleased with the status quo and we care enough to do something about it to improve it. What we are also doing in the same token is showing the athletes that we recognize the problems associated with the adjustments they as students need to make when they start college and also that we care about what happens to them, not only while they attend the school, but we also care about their future once their career here is over.

Need/Want

The NCAA and school presidents are both calling for reform. They both need enrollment and graduation rates to increase in order to maintain credibility in the public eye. Student athletes want to know that their schools and the NCAA alike have their best interests at the forefront of their decisions and recognize that being a student athlete is not an easy task given the current guidelines. Therein lies your need/want relationship.

Implementing this program can be the foundation towards rebuilding the trust factor between universities and their athletes.

Receiver Tenets

Explanation

The three major elements that you want to convey to your audience is:

1. Due to the overwhelming number of problems student athletes face, there is an evident need for change to the status quo.
2. Implementing a student athlete orientation program will raise graduation rates and lower the number of problems that many athletes encounter.
3. Accepting this program and making a change will ultimately provide positive feedback for your university and prove that it cares enough about their students to adjust to their needs.

Mutual Benefit

To properly capture your audience, you must stress the mutual benefits through the implementation of the program. You must express the concept of the class is not just to benefit the athletes but it was also developed with the schools in mind as well. As more and more student athletes prosper from the class additional recognition will be bestowed upon the school for making such a bold change and ensuring that their athletes' futures are bright whether it is with or without sports.

Efficiency

No school will want to address an action plan to implement this program if they think it will be a hassle or if the plan presented to them is unclear. You must make your audience understand that the undertaking of this class can be easily and efficiently implemented

into any university's curriculum. If the presentation to them is vague and ambiguous, it is likely that the action plan will also be the same way and thus, deter the audience from making a change.

Reward/Recognition

Sticking with the main points of this argument, making your audience aware that implementing this plan will benefit both the schools and the athletes and it will also raise the reputation of the university to even higher standards than it is at the present time. The school will be praised for its bold move for its implementation of the class, and in turn, it will be viewed as an organization that is not content with the status quo, rather, always looking for a way to improve itself and the future of its students.

Receiver Dynamics

Survival

The case can be made to the audience that if something is not done to change the present state of graduation rates and behavior among student athletes, their jobs very well could be in jeopardy. The university needs to make changes not only for the good of the athletes but quite possibly to preserve their jobs as well. If they do not make the proper changes themselves others may unfortunately be brought in to rectify or improve the situation.

Thrival

Many universities are basically in a no-win situation right now with the media and athletes alike calling for a change to the present format. Implementing this class to assist college athletes dramatically improves the status quo and benefits everyone involved. The change will benefit the universities with the media and the athletes because it will prove

that the schools are not pleased with the present state of college athletics and are bold enough to make a change.

Quality

As stories of student athlete misconduct rises daily, the addition of a student athlete orientation class will greatly reduce the likelihood of problems among athletes and thus raise the quality of collegiate athletics.

Need

At the present time, no one from the NCAA or any university has given any inclination that they are working on plans to improve the overall awareness of collegiate athletes. This plan that has been discussed is the only one any university has at this point. Unless the school has something else that would assist student athletes in their transition to college life, they need to implement this plan because allowing college athletes to go on at their present state is not an option.

Esteem

During the presentation, an appeal to the egos of your audience will assist in the implementation of the plan. Asking the audience the question, "How would all of you like to be known as the people responsible for revolutionizing collegiate athletics and improving the quality of life for your student athletes?" Showing the group how implementing this program can be used as an impressive public relations tool may not be a deciding factor, but it will definitely act as a positive influence in their decision making process.

Pretext

To give the audience an understanding of what it is you are trying to accomplish, it would be advised to send the group a small overview of your plan to read prior to the

meeting. The pre-reading for this presentation will be a short two- to -three page outline. Realizing that the university is very knowledgeable and educated on the general topic of their student athletes, all the author should want to get across is the basic premise of the strategy and a general outline of what will be covered, so the committee will have some idea of what it is that will be requested of them. This give your audience more time to focus on the key points of the program's implementation rather than overall concept.

Improvements

As stated earlier, there are no other plans being brought forward by any other schools or the NCAA. This is a multi-beneficial plan for all involved. The athletes and schools are both receiving benefits that up until now they would not have had before. In this scenario, it is better to try and implement a plan, rather than stand pat and do nothing when there is a glaring need for a change to the status quo.

Growth Potential

Implementing this plan can send a university into a whole new arena of prosperity. Financial success aside, the fact that graduation rates among athletes have the potential to reach all-time highs with this strategy makes this plan worth trying. The knock on college athletics is that the success on the field is not supported by sufficient graduation rates from the classroom or in their behavior off the field. This plan will bring about something many universities have never had, an equal balance of success, both in the classroom and on the playing field.

SWOT Analysis

The following section is devoted to formulating an action plan towards the integration of the orientation class into any school's curriculum. The SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities & threats) analysis is a formulated method to identify and analyze any work environment and defines the optimum ways to implement the program based on the strengths and weaknesses of your staff (Lombardi, 2001 p.187)

Strengths

- The school's past history of successful class implementations to the curriculum
- A strong basic orientation class for all incoming freshman to use as a prototype to build the program upon
- Availability of useful resources (i.e. large classrooms, computers, video equipment, projection screens, etc.)

Weaknesses

- Course is new and untested, will take some time to make adjustments based on needs of students. Will not be able to weigh its level of success at the outset.
- No program such as this has ever been tried. The likelihood of early pessimists upon implementation will be high.
- Many professors may not be interested in teaching the topic to student athletes.

Opportunities

- No matter what university it might be all schools can readily agree there are a growing number of troubled student athletes and there is a need for change.
- Graduation rates among scholarship athletes have increased over the past five years () proving that more student athletes are concerned about their future beyond their playing years.
- Implementing an orientation program for student athletes and creating the possibility of raising graduation rates would bring about positive publicity for any university.
- Good publicity would likely increase enrollment based on the perceptions that your school is willing to do whatever is necessary to adjust athletes to college life and ensure them a good education for their future.

Threats

- Student athletes not believing that the class is in their best interest and taking no interest in the program
- Coaches opposition to adding another class onto their players' already heavy course load
- NCAA looks negatively upon any Division I-A school having an orientation class that shows collegiate sports in a negative aspect

Conclusion

The proposal and implementation of a collegiate athlete orientation course can be beneficial for both the student athletes and the school. The major wild card for success or failure for the program hinges on how it's presented to those in charge of the decision-making process. It will take a lot of persuasion and motivation to convince any school as to why they should do anything further for their student athletes than they already do. The key factors when presenting your ideas should be as follows:

1. Basing your methodology and presentation around the core values of the school
2. Proving that the interests of the school and their athletes are at the forefront of your rationale for developing this concept
3. Making those in charge believe that they do not just want to make a change for the sake of change, but that they **NEED** to make this change for the good of the school and the long-term futures of their student athletes.

By resonating these principles throughout your presentation you should be discover little resistance in getting any institution who cares about their students and their reputation to adopt this course into their curriculum.

Chapter IV

Inside the Huddle- Garnering Informed Perceptions & Perspectives

Description of the Survey

The survey included ten statements that were measured on a five-point scale. The individuals taking the survey were given a ratings system that ranged from strongly agree, agree, neutral, disagree and finally strongly disagree. Looking at the statements, each took a particular view on topics relating to college athletics. The author's intention was to elicit responses, positive or negative, to the current state of college athletics and the public's perception of the industry.

Sample

The goal was to survey a minimum of 50 people to elicit a large enough quantitative response to prove relevant to this study. The final number of recipients surveyed was 80. 40 of the individuals that were surveyed are presently Division-I student athletes from Seton Hall University. Every recipient has taken college level courses and has participated in collegiate athletics. The reasoning behind having these basic qualifications was that the author wanted the respondents to: (a) have an understanding of college life and how athletics fits into the overall college experience and (b) have an idea about the problems that face college athletics and its athletes. It was the author's belief that to get a true understanding of the problems that plague college

athletes, there is no better way to obtain those ideas than from those who are, or at one time were college athletes.

Purpose of the Survey

The reasoning behind developing this survey was to assist the author in analyzing how people view the current state of college athletics. Do athletes, current or former, believe developing an orientation program for college athletes would be beneficial to the athlete's adjustment to college life? The intention of the survey was to accept or contest the ideas discovered through the review of the literature.

Analyzing the Results

The author collected surveys from 80 individuals, all of whom answered all 10 of the statements that were in the survey. The total number of responses were divided by each individual response to determine the percentage of each answer.

Statement 1: For the most part, student-athletes have a difficult time adjusting to their lives on campus.

- Strongly Agree (Answer A) = 15%
- Agree (Answer B) = 54%
- Neutral (Answer C) = 4%
- Disagree (Answer D) = 18%

- Strongly Disagree (Answer E) = 9%

The results show that the majority (sixty-nine percent) either chose to strongly agree or agree with the statement. This reveals that most student athletes do have a problem adjusting to college life. Only four percent of the respondents were neutral, which leads the author to believe that these athletes might not have encountered problems in their college adjustment or did not know of any other student athletes who had. Twenty-seven percent either disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement. This leads the author to believe that these athletes never had a problem adjusting to life on campus.

Statement 2: College athletes have the opportunity/resources to address issues they face on a daily basis.

- Strongly agree (Answer A) = 11%
- Agree (Answer B) = 37%
- Neutral (Answer C) = 6%
- Disagree (Answer D) = 34%
- Strongly Disagree (Answer E) = 12%

Forty-eight percent of the respondents either strongly agreed or agreed that they believe they have the ability to request assistance when they run into difficult situations. Six percent remained neutral, which leads the author to believe that they did not want to share their true feelings. Forty-six percent of the athletes chose to disagree or strongly disagree

because they felt that they did not have the resources available to them to properly help them with their problems.

Statement 3: It is just as important to me as a college athlete to graduate, as it is to play well for my team.

- Strongly agree (Answer A) = 45%
- Agree (Answer B) = 30%
- Neutral (Answer C) = 2%
- Disagree (Answer D) = 16%
- Strongly Disagree (Answer E) = 7%

Seventy-seven percent chose to strongly agree or agree with the statement, which means the majority of respondents are set on obtaining a degree as well as playing college sports. Two percent decided to remain neutral and not make their feelings known.

Twenty-three percent stated that they disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement, revealing that it is not as important to them to receive a degree, as it is to play well at their respective sport.

Statement 4: For the most part, public opinion is that student athletes are in school to play sports, not to receive a good education.

- Strongly agree (Answer A) = 32%

- Agree (Answer B) = 39%
- Neutral (Answer C) = 10%
- Disagree (Answer D) = 10%
- Strongly Disagree (Answer E) = 9%

Seventy-one percent strongly agreed or agreed with the statement and believes the public only sees them as athletes, not real students. Ten percent took a neutral stance and were unwilling to take a side. Nineteen percent either disagreed or strongly disagreed that the public does not view them as only college athletes.

Statement 5: College athletes encounter different problems and challenges than normal students:

- Strongly agreed (Answer A) = 52%
- Agreed (Answer B) = 35%
- Neutral (Answer C) = 3%
- Disagree (Answer D) = 8%
- Strongly Disagree (Answer E) = 2%

Eighty-seven percent agreed that athletes encounter different problems than normal students. This greatly assists in exemplifying the point that there is an obvious need for student athletes to receive extra training in their adjustment to college. Six percent of the respondents decided to remain neutral and not take a stance. Ten percent disagreed or

strongly disagreed and believes students' problems are the same whether they are an athlete or not.

Statement 6: In general, college athletes do not receive enough recognition for balancing their schoolwork and practice/games.

- Strongly agreed (Answer A) = 33%
- Agreed (Answer B) = 40%
- Neutral (Answer C) = 6%
- Disagree (Answer D) = 20%
- Strongly Disagree (Answer E) = 1%

Seventy-seven percent of the athletes either strongly agree or agree to the statement. This leads to believe the author to believe that a majority of student athletes do not feel they are recognized for the hard work they do. Six percent decided to stay neutral. Twenty-one percent disagreed or strongly disagreed and believe that student athletes do get enough recognition for leading double lives.

Statement 7: Many schools do not do enough to prepare their athletes for life on campus and the "pitfalls" that they might encounter.

- Strongly agree (Answer A) = 25%
- Agree (Answer B) = 31%

- Neutral (Answer C) = 12%
- Disagree (Answer D) = 26%
- Strongly Disagree (Answer E) = 11%

A total of fifty-six percent either strongly agreed or agreed with the statement, thus, the majority of student athletes believe schools could do more to help their athletes. Twelve percent remained neutral which could be because they do not know a lot of student-athletes at other institutions or how other schools take care of their athletes. The other thirty-seven percent disagreed or strongly disagreed and believes that many schools do enough for their student athletes.

Statement 8: The school I play/played for has reasonably prepared me for life as a college athlete.

- Strongly Agree (Answer A) = 10%
- Agree (Answer B) = 24%
- Neutral (Answer C) = 8%
- Disagree (Answer D) = 42%
- Strongly Disagree = 16%

Thirty-four percent of the respondents strongly agreed or agreed that their school has properly prepared them for college life. Eight percent were neutral. Fifty-eight percent of the respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed meaning that they do not feel their

respective school has reasonably prepared them for college life. At some point many of these respondents may have encountered problems and not known how to deal with the situation properly.

Statement 9: I would welcome an orientation class specifically designed to teach athletes how to adjust to life and what to expect on campus.

- Strongly Agreed (Answer A) = 34%
- Agreed (Answer B) = 48%
- Neutral (Answer C) = 2%
- Disagree (Answer D) = 12%
- Strongly Disagree (Answer E) = 4%

An overwhelming majority of eighty-two percent of the respondents strongly agreed or agreed with the developing and implementation of an orientation class. This is most helpful in proving the author's work, as it documents that student athletes would be in favor of such a class to assist them in their transition to college. Only 2% were neutral. The other sixteen percent either disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement.

Statement 10: Some of the pro athletes we see running into legal trouble can possibly be attributed to a lack of guidance while in college.

- Strongly Agree (Answer A) = 15%

- Agree (Answer B) = 54%
- Neutral (Answer C) = 13%
- Disagree (Answer D) = 16%
- Strongly Disagree (Answer E) = 2%

Sixty-nine percent of the survey strongly agreed or agreed with the statement. The majority believe that one of the reasons all these pro athletes get themselves into trouble can be attributed to the lack of guidance, as far back as college, maybe even earlier. The fact remains that many of these athletes receive too much too soon and do not always know how to handle it. Thirteen percent were neutral which can possibly be attributed to the fact that people might not want to guess or speculate as to what were the factors leading up to an athlete getting themselves into trouble. The other eighteen percent either disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement and do not believe you can attribute a lack of guidance as the reason why athletes run into problems.

Conclusion

The majority of the respondents to this survey answered as anticipated. The survey provided a valuable gauge as to how athletes view the current state of college athletics and verified the author's view that an orientation class for freshman athletes would be a welcomed addition to their curriculum. It was discovered that many of the student athletes believe that they do have a tougher time adjusting to college life and they do

encounter many problems that do not normally plague the average student. It's for these reasons, among many others discussed within this research, that college institutions need to adopt this orientation class in order to provide their student athletes with an enhanced transitional phase towards their college lives.

Chapter V

The Playbook

This chapter will focus on the creation of an orientation course for student-athletes. The course will be a mandatory requirement for all student-athletes or they will be declared ineligible to compete in their respective sport. The goal is to provide a "real world" effect for the students to properly prepare them for life on campus and their future beyond their collegiate years.

The Training Manual

The following is an outline of what the essential components of the orientation's class structure should be. Teaching tools and a detailed schedule of events are included. The course is scheduled to be a one to two-day seminar, for this research it has been set up as a one-day program. The course should include as much interaction between the student athletes as possible.

The key to the success of the program will be keeping as many students involved as possible. If the class turns into a seminar where the moderator is speaking the majority of the time, you will automatically lose your audience and the class will be a failure.

Introduction

The fact that today's modern athletes are role models does not correspond with the reality that they are human and make errors in judgment just like everyone else in this world. The trend of finding student athletes involved in criminal acts or academically ineligible is growing at a considerable rate. Athletes, though some of them wish not to be, are role models. Athletes are frequently who our youth pattern themselves after. Athletes are whom these kids watch in their spare time, whom they mimic on the playing field and whom they listen to when the athletes are giving interviews.

There is no better example of this than the now famous Gatorade commercial, which touted the catchy phrase "Like Mike, if I could be like Mike," and having kids thinking, yes, I'd like to be Mike. Michael Jordan is of course, who the commercial is referring, and many would agree that they would love to be him.

As much as that phrase defined a generation of sports fans, another phrase comes to mind as well when defining today's modern athlete. It dates back to the year 1919, one of the first acts of crime in the sports world. It stems from the "Black Sox Scandal," which was based on the players of the Chicago White Sox baseball team, eight to be exact, who "threw" the World Series. The players were caught and as a result, were kicked out of baseball. One of those suspected players was "Shoeless" Joe Jackson.

Jackson, a popular player at that time, was prohibited from playing professional baseball thus ending what was to be a promising career, all for making a bad decision. A popular phrase was coined in relation to this event and thus is the reason for mentioning Joe Jackson and the incident. A young boy approached Jackson after the trial and the boy

was documented in saying, "Say it ain't so Joe, say it ain't so." The young fan couldn't believe that his hero, the person he looked up to, could be involved in something so immoral. This is the same reaction that many fans have in today's society when they hear of a famous athlete who has committed a crime. We are so shocked and appalled that this person we admired can do something bad.

Has this glorification of athletes gone too far, or have athletes' conduct come under scrutiny more than ever before? Is it fair for society to expect collegiate athletes to live a perfect life because of who they are and because they are receive so much attention? Should all student athletes be scrutinized and generalized for the misdeeds of a small percentage of the overall number of student athletes in all collegiate sports?

Some of the topics this course will examine are the roles you as student athletes, have on society and whether the expectations fans and your schools have are unfair. Case studies, using both good and bad situations, former and present players, will be used as teaching tools to show how the media portrays student athletes and how much of an impact it can have on a player's career and future.

Discussions will also include how you as a college athlete feel about your school, the NCAA, the fans, the media, agents, boosters and all other factors outside of the game and how all of these affect you both on and off the field. The goal of this course is to adjust you to your life as a college athlete and for you to understand how every decision you make has a direct effect on your future. Through this training you should be able to spot certain "pitfall" situations that you will one day encounter, how to deal with them, and, in many cases, how to avoid problems before they happen.

What student athletes need more than ever is to restore their image in the public eye. We need more "Mikes" in the world and more athletes that know their role, accept it,

and do whatever possible to uphold a clean and respectful image. Your image no longer starts when you become a professional athlete. It begins from the first day of your college life. Everything you do from the moment you step foot on campus will have a direct affect on your future and the success you have, whether it be on the field or off.

It is normally with much greater enthusiasm that the public and media pay more attention to the negative stories rather than the positive ones in most situations. Since it is more recognizable to do wrong then right, we must stress the success stories to our younger generation and give more examples of the positive things athletes do both on and off the field. We then need to chastise and ultimately punish those who commit criminal acts or do not meet the standard requirements needed to compete in collegiate athletics. By doing this, the schools and the NCAA are minimizing the "ripple effect" this can have among teammates and ultimately upset the overall positive flow of the sports world.

Training Schedule

The following is an outline of today's training and a brief description of each section:

I. 10:00-10:30 a.m. Meet and Greet Session

This will be the introduction session to our program where your fellow student athletes and teammates will introduce themselves and get to know each other. When players introduce themselves, they will share an experience with the rest of the group where either they, or a teammate was put in a compromising or uncomfortable position because they were athletes.

II. 10:30-12:00 p.m. Video and Media Clips

The section will cover good vs. bad examples of players' (both past and present) lifestyles and perceptions from the media and fans perspective using both video and periodical clips. When does the media go too far into an athletes' personal life? Are the expectations of the media, coaches and universities set too high and thus putting too much pressure on you as an athlete to succeed at all costs? When does a player's actions off the field become a distraction to himself and his teammates on the field and in the locker room? As much as a player accomplishes on the field during their career, are they always remembered more for the trouble they got into off the field? These are some of the questions that will be discussed in this session and your personal feelings, if any, on each topic.

III. 12:00-1:00 p.m. Break

IV. 1:00-2:00 p.m. Questionnaire

This will be a series of true/false and opinionated questions to get the idea of what you as athletes think about your images and how your actions look in the public eye. The questions are not designed to provide right or wrong answers, rather evoke personal definitions by yourselves as to what all of you consider proper or improper personal conduct.

V. 2:00-3:00 p.m. Role Playing

This segment will put all of you in certain compromising situations that you may one day find yourselves in. You all will be asked to act out each situation as to how you would handle it if it were really happening. After each skit is completed, others will be given the chance to agree or disagree with how you acted and offer their opinions as to how they might have handled the situation differently.

VI. 3:00-4:30 p.m. Guest Speaker

Lawrence Phillips will be joining us as our guest speaker today to talk about his life and the hardships he endured over the course of his playing career. Mr. Phillips will give an in- depth look at how his poor behavior started and slowly grew to engulf his life and ruined what could have been a promising career in pro sports. We will follow-up this session with a question and answer period.

VII. 4:30-5:00 p.m. Wrap up/Summary

This will be the close of our session where we will summarize everything that has been discussed over the course of the day and how each of you feel about it. A brief survey is located in the back of your training manuals which we would like you to fill out

at the end of the course for your ideas on what worked, what needs to be changed, or what could be added to enhance the program.

Meet and Greet Session

This will be our introductory phase of today's training class. All of you will be given a brief outline of the day's events and the major objectives of the course. You will all be given a chance to introduce yourselves and tell your teammates/classmates a little background about yourself. Each of you will also share a situation with the class where you as an athlete, felt that you were in a compromising or uncomfortable position because of who you were.

Once that is complete, please read the attached clips that follow this page. The following are articles that demonstrate collegiate athletes in positive and negative situations.

As a student athlete, how do articles such as these make you feel about yourself, about your fellow athletes and about the current state of college athletics? What does it say about the sports industry in general?

Good vs. Bad Example

The following is an example of two players with very similar careers, yet totally different lifestyles. Derrick Knight and William Green were teammates for almost 4 years at Boston College. Both were friends, both played tailback for Boston College's football team and both have had very memorable careers. So why then will one always be known for breaking BC's all-time rushing record, while the other will always be remembered much more for his off-the-field actions, then for his play on the field even though he made it to the pros?

Question 1.

How do two players with such similar backgrounds, from the same university, wind up on such different paths during their playing careers?

Question 2.

Do you feel it is fair that William Green gets recognized more for his off-the-field problems than for his stellar career at BC and for his outstanding play for the Cleveland Browns? By being suspended twice by the NFL for substance abuse, did Green do irreparable harm to his reputation? Despite the fact that he is a great running back and only 23, will there always be a shadow cast upon his accomplishments from the public eye? Why or why not? Does he still have the time to mend his reputation and career?

A Tale of Two Teammates



Derrick Knight

vs.

William Green



Career Highlights

- BC's all-time leading rusher
- 17 career 100-yrd rushing games
- 2 consecutive 1,000yd seasons
- 5-time Big East Offensive Player of the week
- Doak Walker Award Finalist for 2003
- Nation's #3 overall rusher for 2003 (133.25 yds. per game)
- 1,400+ yds. during 1st starting season

Career Highlights & Lowlights

Drafted 16th overall by Cleveland Browns in 2002
 Named MVP of 2002 Music City Bowl
 Ranks 3rd on BC all-time rushing list (2,974 yds)
 Ranks 2nd on BC's all-time touchdown list (33)
 2001 Big East Offensive Player of the Year
 Signed a 7-year \$7.85 million contract in July 2002
 Suspended twice at BC for marijuana use
 Arrested Oct of 2003 for DUI
 Receives 4-game suspension from NFL for substance abuse
 Stabbed in the shoulder by Fiancee in Nov 2003
 NFL extends suspension for 2003, ending Green's season

Video & Media Clips

This presentation will start out with a video excerpt from the movie "*The Program*." The clip is a classic example of the problems college athletes face on a daily basis. This section also shows many different types of media articles of success, failure and struggles of former and present day college athletes. How do some of these articles make you feel as a student athlete? Do you think that the media gets much more enthusiastic when writing about an athlete's struggles, rather than writing a story of success? Does the media exaggerate certain stories that would normally be considered a non-issue in the locker rooms or by the coaches and your school? Does it bother you when you see friends/teammates being ripped apart by the media?

These are some of the questions and feelings we will discuss after reviewing the following articles.

****Note to advisor-**For each of the following four sections (feel good, controversial, bad & pressure articles) you should find anywhere from 3-4 clippings to discuss for each section with the class. The advisor should also be responsible for finding video clips showing how the media portrays college athletes in positive and negative stories.

“Feel-Good” Articles

The following are articles written about various pro and college athletes' success stories. Do you think that these stories are written with the same passion and enthusiasm reporters use to write a story of controversy about an athlete? Do you think we need more stories such as these to send positive messages to our youth?

“Controversial” Articles

The following are articles that can be perceived as controversial and possibly detrimental to a player or the team. Do the media overstep certain boundaries into a player's personal life when writing articles such as these? Is there a point when the media should respect a player's privacy? Do certain articles prove to be a distraction to the whole team as well as the player?

“Bad Example” Articles

These stories are examples of poor behavior by pro athletes.

Are some of these stories blown out of proportion by the media? Are these players guilty before they can prove their innocence? Does it bother you when reading articles such as these and you see athletes in trouble with the law, especially if they are your teammates? Does their behavior become a major distraction in the locker room?

“Pressure” Articles

The following articles are all examples of the pressure that's put on today's athlete to perform. Is the pressure fair, due to the salaries professional players make, or are the expectations of fans and the media too high? Due to the state of today's sports industry and the money that is invested in it, does this pressure become such a burden, that athletes will do anything to succeed?

Role Playing

In this exercise you will be partnered with one or two of your colleagues to act out a certain scenario that many athletes are faced with everyday.

- 1.) You are approached by a fan that requests your autograph during dinner at a local restaurant.
- 2.) You are out at local hangout with teammates, when a girl who is known to exaggerate her stories regarding the relationships she has had with fellow players on your team approaches you.
- 3.) A good friend is spending more and more time with certain people who are known to be associated with drugs and gangs. How do you handle telling your friend that you do not wish to be associated with these people, if you even decide to tell him at all?
- 4.) A reporter asks you if your bad play of late is due to the fact of your recent poor academics and the death of a very close family member.
- 5.) A recent injury has hindered your play and even before the injury, your backup has been close to taking your starting role. The coach approaches you and asks how you are feeling and if you will be able to start the next game.
- 6.) A magazine article misquotes you in regards to some off-color remarks you made about a few of your teammates and your coach in a recent interview. Now you walk into the locker room for the first time since the article was published. Do you try to smooth things over or wait for someone to approach you about it?
- 7.) A teammate confides in you that he is gay.

- 8.) A well-known sports agent calls you and requests a meeting. At the meeting he offers to pay you \$10,000.00 if you will agree to sign with his agency after you graduate.
- 9.) At a post-game function, a university booster congratulates you on a great performance in today's game and hands you an envelope with \$500.00 in it. What do you do? Why?
-

The final session of the day will conclude with a guest speaker. The speaker should be someone who is of notoriety and who student athletes can relate to from the sports world. This is probably the most vital part of the training as it is important to have all athletes see what can happen to one of their peers when they make the wrong choices for their careers and ultimately their lives. Listening to the harsh realities of fallen heroes can be crucial to the young athletes' development and future decision-making process.

Today's Guest Speaker

Lawrence Phillips

#1 | Running Back | Nebraska Cornhuskers



Height: 5-11

Weight: 210 lbs.

Position: Running Back

Born: 1975

Drafted: Selected by the St. Louis Rams, sixth pick overall, of the 1996 NFL draft.

Career Highlights

Career Highlights

- NFL Europe's Offensive Player of the Year
- Heisman Trophy Candidate
- Part of 1996 National Championship Nebraska Cornhuskers team

- Played in the NFL for the Rams, Dolphins & 49ers
- Member of the CFL's Montreal Alouettes & Calgary Stampeders

Lowlights

Suspended from Nebraska's football team for allegedly beating a young woman and dragging her down a flight of steps by her hair. Came in 2nd in the Heisman Trophy voting largely because of his arrest.

1997-Released by the St. Louis Rams for insubordination and conduct detrimental to the team. During his career in St. Louis, he was arrested three times and spent 23 days in jail for parole violations stemming from a DUI arrest.

-Signed with the Miami Dolphins later that year but was subsequently released after pleading no-contest to slapping a woman in a Miami nightclub

-Signed with the San Francisco 49ers after he was voted NFL Europe's top offensive player but was released later in the year for missing practice.

-Released in May of '03 from the Montreal Alouettes (CFL) for failure to meet "minimum behavioral standards."

-Released in Oct. '03 from his 2nd CFL team, the Calgary Stampeders for disrupting practice by arguing with the head coach.

-Arrested on Nov. 27th in Montreal for sexual assault and uttering threats.

Players such as Lawrence Phillips have proved to be heroes for their team and even icons for the sports they play for, but their lives off the field, are far less heroic. Lawrence Phillips has always seemed like a natural when it came to the game of football. He was a star running back for the Nebraska Cornhuskers from 1993-96. Phillips was named as a finalist for the ultimate college award, the Heisman Trophy. While at Nebraska he broke several rushing records, including the single-season rushing record. Many viewed him as a top NFL prospect but failed to know there was a darker side to Phillip's life.

Lawrence's problems with his personal life seemed to have surfaced around 1996, his Heisman campaign year. He was arrested for domestic abuse and unfortunately lost the Heisman campaign mainly due to his arrest. Although his off the field troubles mounted over the course of the next few years, Phillips managed to have productive seasons with St. Louis. Phillips' problems became insurmountable in 1997 and 1999 when his poor attitude and arrests led to suspensions and his release from three different NFL teams.

Lawrence will be talking about all of these issues, his career and how everyday is a fight to battle the anger and the problems that are still inside of him.

Survey

- 1) Do you feel more aware of the impact certain decisions you make can have on your playing career and future?
- 2) What do you feel was the most interesting or helpful part of this course?
- 3) What, if anything, was not beneficial and could be excluded from the course?
- 4) Is there anything that was not included in the course that you would like to see included in future courses?
- 5) How would you rate this course on a scale of 1-5 (5 being the highest)? Why?

Additional Comments:

Summary

As college athletes in today's society, you are looked up to by younger generations who want to be just like you. As heroes and role models, you are also ridiculed and chastised by the media for any bad decisions or indiscretions you might make even though you are still at a critical age of development yourselves. The difference between success or failure in your careers lie in the fact of how well you learn from mistakes and how well you will deal with adversity.

This course was designed to help all of you adjust to a lifestyle where the normal rules do not necessarily apply. Using several different resources and teaching methods, the goal is to make all of you aware that every decision you make off the field directly affects your career on the field and your future once you leave college. Contracts, endorsements and all other lucrative deals that await you, all hinge on you being able to stay out of trouble. If you do face adverse situations, it is crucial you know the proper way of rectifying them to avoid the "domino effect" and having it lead to larger problems in the future. Every great athlete has had times of weakness in their lives and falls down at one point or another, the difference is how quick you get up and recover from it or if you ever recover at all.

The media unfortunately more than not, will always look for the "has-been" or "never-will-be" story before they write about an athlete's success. The best teaching tool that can be used by any of you is history. The sports world is littered with collegiate athletes just like yourselves who never learned how to deal with their fame and thus turned to gambling, drugs, violence or received a sub-standard education. Learn from these examples and make yourself into one of those positive success stories for yourself and for those that want to be like you.

Chapter VI

The Buzzer Beater

In the previous chapter, the author developed the blueprints necessary for the implementation of a collegiate athlete orientation program. The main goal of the program is to maximize the information given in the time allotted for the course to ensure the athletes fully comprehend what they are about to undertake over the span of the next four to five (red-shirt depending) years. The course will be the first the student-athletes enroll in, thus, making it extremely important for a school to set a positive tone and make it clear from day one that the students' best interests and their futures beyond athletics are at the forefront of the school's decision-making process.

With an increasing number of high school students opting to turn professional and forego their college eligibility altogether, it is imperative that schools take whatever steps necessary to ensure their student athletes graduate and are well prepared for life with or without sports. Now that the a district court recently ruled in favor of Maurice Clarrett, stating that the NFL cannot make age restrictions regarding eligibility for their draft (ESPN.com, 2004), will enrollment numbers decrease even further among college athletes? Will the NCAA be forced to pay players to entice them to play college sports before they decide to turn pro? With the events unfolding at the University of Colorado, will institutions be forced to evoke a 'no tolerance' rule for poor behavior among their college athletes? With exuberant amounts of money generated annually from college athletics, it will be interesting to see how the NCAA reacts, or if they react, to the constant increase of early entrants into pro sports and team scandals by creating a system

to protect not only the integrity of the players and college athletics, but also the good name of their institutions as well.

The fact remains that as of now, there isn't a plan on the table to change the present state of college athletics. With no other plans being administered, the orientation program presented here should be introduced, not for the sake of change, but rather for the chance of success. In this chapter the author will make ten key points as to why, if implemented, this program will be a success for both the athletes and for the schools alike.

1. Specific Need

As mentioned throughout this research, there is an undeniable need for change within college athletics. So many institutions have been thrust into the spotlight due to poor behavior by their athletes that schools can no longer afford the negative publicity these acts of selfless indulgence by the students brings. You are never going to stop every athlete from making bad choices. But by having an orientation class that provides awareness to your student athletes before they are put in uncompromising positions will more times than not, minimize the mistakes that could be made by the athletes in crucial decision-making periods that will affect not only themselves but their team and school as well.

2. Easy modification

As designed in Chapter 5, the course can be easily modified to fit any school's specific needs. The easier the class is to adapt to any curriculum, the better the reception will be because not many institutions will be inclined to put a lot of effort and money into a class that will only be available to a fraction of their student body. The course can be extended or shortened depending on the time frame allotted and depending on the size of your athletic department, can be taught by someone in the athletic compliance area, thus saving costs on hiring another faculty member to teach the course. Most importantly it can be implemented into a school's curriculum for no more, or even less than it would take to finance any new class being offered to the general student body.

3. Will the class generate clear results?

No one can predict the future, but by implementing this orientation class, a school is sending out a clear message: We care about our student athletes and their futures.

Introducing a class of this nature will assist the athletes in their overall decision-making process, but results of this nature are difficult to quantify because much of the success of the program will be to minimize the mistakes made by the athletes and most likely go unseen by the public. The only way to observe this is by noting the average "incidents" among a school's athletes and if there is a considerable drop in the rate of incidents from year to year after the class' implementation, then it can be considered an overall success. Even if the class saves a few athletes a year from making mistakes that can ruin their futures, isn't that more successful than having no system at all?

4. Does the course mirror the values and ideals of the university?

Any successful institution is based on a high value of morals and ideals. Having your student athletes run amok on campus and make national headlines for their inappropriate behavior threatens to destroy the integrity of the school for every off-the-field incident

that occurs. Although an institution cannot make every decision for their athletes, they can ensure that they do everything in their power to give their athletes a handbook for their life as a collegiate athlete by implementing this class. Many schools are well known for their athletic programs and as representatives of the university, every athlete should be aware of how their actions are not only a poor reflection of them but on their school as well.

5. The long-term benefits of the program

The long-term benefits of the program can be seen as three-fold. The initial success can be seen as the basic fact that the school was bold enough to implement the class and change the status quo. Too many decision-makers are afraid to change for fear of what the future may bring. By moving forward and realizing that college athletics has evolved, you are taking a major step towards resolving the issue by assisting the athletes' transition to college life. The second benefit would be an increase in positive press as the public will view such a move as bold, good-natured and supportive of your student-athletes and that the school will take whatever steps necessary to reverse the trend of inappropriate athlete behavior that has plagued so many other schools. Lastly, the class will be viewed as a "good will" gesture for the athletes. Many athletes today feel that

their schools just care about their athletic abilities and not their well-being. This program can be used a stepping-stone to repairing a damaged relationship that many schools share with their athletes.

6. Easy short-term adjustment

If it starts becoming clear after the outset of the program that certain aspects of the class are not well-received or are not working as well as originally planned, the course can be easily modified to fit the needs/wants of the institution and/or student athletes. The whole basis of success for this program hedges on the proper implementation and how the athletes receive it. If the class is getting negative feedback, adjustments can be made to modify the course according to the suggestions of the students. If this program weren't easily adaptable, it would just prove to be a waste of time for both the athletes and the institutions.

7. Practicality

This program would be viable for any school that has an athletic program. Whether the school is Division I, II or III, the fact is athletes are still athletes. Many of the problems that plague today's student-athletes are the same no matter what school they may be attending. Thus, regardless of whether you are implementing this in a large or small school, the fact remains that adapting to college life is tough and adapting to life as a

student-athlete can be even harder and every athlete should be given the chance to succeed from day one.

8. Improve school/athlete relationship

At the present time the relationship between student athletes and their respective schools are strained to say the least. Student athletes believe that they work hard and that the school receives all the money and recognition, while schools believe their athletes are deserving of a scholarship, an education and not much else thereafter. By implementing the orientation program, school's can use this as a good-will gesture towards their athletes. Many athletes will view this as a selfless act by their schools with little or no ulterior motive involved. This is not to say that by developing this class that it will by any means fully repair the relationship between the two parties, but it will serve as a bridge towards repairing the trust between both parties that has severely deteriorated over the years.

9. Will there be improvement?

Considering that no alternative plans are presently available, would things possibly get any worse by implementing this program? Everyone in college athletics agrees that the current state of affairs needs to change but no one is doing anything to change them.

Considering the lack of alternatives, there is no reason why adopting this program will be anything but a positive step towards repairing the image of college athletics and every institution involved therein.

10. Production and progression

For college athletics to move forward, there needs to be a plan in place to change the current state of affairs. Developing an orientation program such as this you are taking the first step in long-term progress. This is not to say that the program is going to solve all that is wrong with college athletics, but it will serve as a building block in what has become an industry in desperate need of change. By optimizing the awareness of your athletes you are developing the relationship necessary to bring about continued success. A new orientation program developed by a school creates interest and better behavior by their athletes, which in turn creates a better image for all of college athletics. This in turn brings a win-win situation for all parties involved.

Conclusion

Within the last ten years the needs and attitudes of the modern-day college athlete have changed immensely. Unfortunately, the structure of college athletics has stayed the same. For years the NCAA has been under the false assumptions that whatever system has worked for them in the past, will still work in the future and that change is not necessary. With allegations of illegal recruiting, drugs, violence, rape and academic fraud making the headlines seemingly everyday for some institutions, does the NCAA really still believe this system is working for everyone?

NCAA president Miles Brand has vowed to change the face of college athletics and to do whatever it takes to restore the credibility and idealism that once made college athletics such a great institution. Is Brand's mission too little, too late? Can the image of college athletics be restored or have too many scandals permanently tarnished the integrity of the industry? Can schools nurture their student athletes without neglecting their education, yet stay competitive in the ranks of big-time college sports?

Donovan McNabb, the all-pro quarterback of the Philadelphia Eagles who also resides on the board of trustees at his alma-matter Syracuse University, believes it can be done. "Obviously you don't want any of those things [scandals] to happen to the university you're part of. You want to make sure you're doing the right thing. Understand you [a college athlete] are not just one the students; you're a role model people look up to and your actions will be magnified. They have to watch what they do and stay up on top of every decision they make because it won't just hurt themselves and family but the university as well" (Hobson, 2003).

McNabb also says that it's not as difficult to convince young athletes how important education is:

"The way to go about it is to show them other big-time players who have received their degrees. Michael Jordan went back to North Carolina to get his degree. Shaquille O'Neal did it. Look at guys like that who are big faces in the NBA or NFL and are taking time in their off-season to go back to receive their degrees" (Hobson, 2003).

The information provided within this research can be used as a valuable resource to institutions that are looking for ways to ease the transition of a student athlete into the collegiate environment. There are a lot of outside distractions that can derail a young athlete's professional career before it even begins. By having an orientation class which details many of these distractions and shows the proper ways of dealing with certain situations, you are already giving your student athletes a better chance at success while at your school and thereafter, then if you had done nothing to assist their transition.

By choosing to do nothing for your student athletes, you run the risk of them ending up as a prototypical example that Bruce Springsteen sang about in "Glory Days," a song about a former athlete who has outlived the success he had on the field and now all that's left are the stories and the memories.

From very early ages, athletes will be promised the world by those who surround them. Money and fame will make them strive to become a star. There are the select few who will make it to a pro career in sports but what happens to the vast majority that have nothing to fall back on when the crowds are no longer there to cheer for them? We must protect our athletes from that type of fateful ending and ensure that they are aware that life still goes on much longer after the crowds that once cheered them are gone.

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1991

Appendix A
Survey Questionnaire

Survey

This survey is an integral part of research for a thesis project necessary to complete a Master of Arts in Corporate and Public Communication degree. The purpose of the project is to develop a student-athlete freshman orientation program. The program's goal is to assist collegiate athletes in their transition to life on campus. The survey results will assist in defining essential components critical in defining, creating and sustaining the orientation program.

All responses to the survey will remain strictly confidential. If you are interested in knowing the final results of the survey, please contact me at cswende22@comcast.net and I will send you a copy.

Please return completed survey to:

Chris Swendeman
830-B Main Street
Belleville, NJ 07109
cswende22@comcast.net

Your participation is greatly appreciated.

Thank you

Student Athlete

A male or female with extraordinary physical skills that enable him or her to compete against others in team or individual sports while simultaneously working towards a degree in higher education.

Please Circle One: College athlete Non-College athlete

Part I: Survey Questions

Based on the scale below, please circle the answer that best symbolizes your opinion.

	SA Strongly Agree	A Agree	N Neutral	D Disagree	SD Strongly Disagree
1. For the most part, student-athletes have a difficult time adjusting to their lives on campus.	SA	A	N	D	SD
2. College athletes have the opportunity/resources to address issues they face on a daily basis.	SA	A	N	D	SD
3. It is just as important for college athletes to graduate, as it is to play well.	SA	A	N	D	SD
4. For the most part, public perception is that student athletes are in school to play sports not to receive a good education.	SA	A	N	D	SD
5. College athletes encounter different problems and challenges than normal students.	SA	A	N	D	SD
6. In general, college athletes do not receive enough recognition for balancing their schoolwork and practice/games.	SA	A	N	D	SD
7. Many schools do not do enough to prepare their athletes for life on campus and the "pitfalls" that they might encounter.	SA	A	N	D	SD
8. My school reasonably prepares a college athlete for life away from sports.	SA	A	N	D	SD
9. An orientation class specifically designed to teach athletes how to adjust to life and what to expect on campus would be a good idea.	SA	A	N	D	SD
10. Some of the pro athletes we see running into legal trouble can possibly be attributed to a lack of guidance while in college.	SA	A	N	D	SD

Part II. Optional Questions

Please answer any or all of the following questions that apply to you.

Gender: ☐ Male ☐ Female

Age: ☐ 18-22 ☐ 23-30 ☐ 31-40 ☐ 41-50

Level of Competition Played: ☐ Division I ☐ Division II ☐ Division III
☐ Other

of Playing Years ☐ 1-2 years ☐ 3 years ☐ 4 years

Did you Redshirt? ☐ Yes ☐ No

If yes, please explain: _____

What sport did you Participate? ☐ Baseball ☐ Basketball ☐ Football ☐ Soccer
☐ Softball ☐ Swimming ☐ Hockey ☐ Other

Scholarship ☐ Full ☐ Partial ☐ None ☐ Walk-On

Level of planned/completed Education ☐ Some college ☐ Undergraduate ☐ Some Graduate
☐ Graduate ☐ Postgraduate